

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) The production of rice in Andhra Pradesh during 1996-97 was 99.01 lakh tonnes, higher by 7.7 per cent over the production level of 91.95 lakh tonnes achieved in 1995-96.

(b) As per the available information, the month end wholesale prices of rice (coarse) in Vijayawada centre of Krishna District in Andhra Pradesh during November & December 1996 and January 1997 are reported to be higher than the prices prevailing during the corresponding period of 1995-96.

(c) The Food Corporation of India (FCI) has procured 4.36, 3.58 and 4.35 lakh tonnes of rice during 1994-95 & 1995-96 crop years (First October to 30th September) and 1996-97 (First October to 7th August) respectively in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh.

(d) The procurement of rice in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh during kharif and rabi seasons were 61.57 and 38.43 percent respectively of total procurement made by FCI during the crop year 1996-97 (up to 7th August, 1997).

(e) It is too early to assess the production prospects of rice during the current kharif season 1997-98 in Andhra Pradesh.

(f) FCI has procured 44.60 lakh tonnes of rice in Andhra Pradesh over and above the target of 42 lakh tonnes by suitably planning the procurement, storage and movement during crop year 1996-97 (up to 7th August, 1997). This strategy would also be continued to procure the surplus rice from the State of Andhra Pradesh during 1997-98.

#### **Demand and Supply of Fertilizer in Kerala**

3266. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of subsidised fertilizers demanded and supplied to Kerala during each of last three years;

(b) the reasons for the short supply; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to meet the required supply to the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) to (c) Urea is the only fertilizer which is under statutory price control. The table below gives the assessed demand,

availability and consumption of urea in Kerala during the years 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97:

	(Lakh tonnes)		
	Assessed demand	Availability*	Consumption
1994-95	1.21	1.21	1.07
1995-96	1.26	1.47	1.21
1996-97	1.33	1.47	1.21 (Estimated)

\*Excluding stock with State Institutional agencies.

The availability of urea in Kerala during the last three years was adequate and there was no short supply.

[Translation]

#### **Procurement Price of Wheat**

3267. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR :  
SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the wheat procurement price has been fixed at Rs. 475 per quintal;

(b) if so, whether the decision of the Government to import wheat at a higher rate than the procurement price caused resentment among the farmers and the farmers of Punjab refused to sell wheat to the Food Corporation of India as a result thereof;

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to formulate any scheme to obviate such crisis and save the farmers from exploitation; and

(d) the measures taken to tackle the problem arising out of hoarding of wheat by the traders and controlling the prices of wheat in the open market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) to (c) The Government fixed the minimum support price of wheat for 1996-97 crop to be marketed in 1997-98 season at Rs. 415 per quintal, marking an increase of Rs. 35 over the MSP fixed for the previous season. The Government after taking into account the requests received from the State Governments of the Punjab and Haryana for further hike in the MSP, decided to grant a Central bonus of Rs. 60 per quintal for the sale of wheat to the Central pool w.e.f. 1.4.97 to 30.6.97. The hike in